

2-14-1977

San
Francisco
Art
Institute

EYE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1977 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY !!

GRADUATE PROGRAM

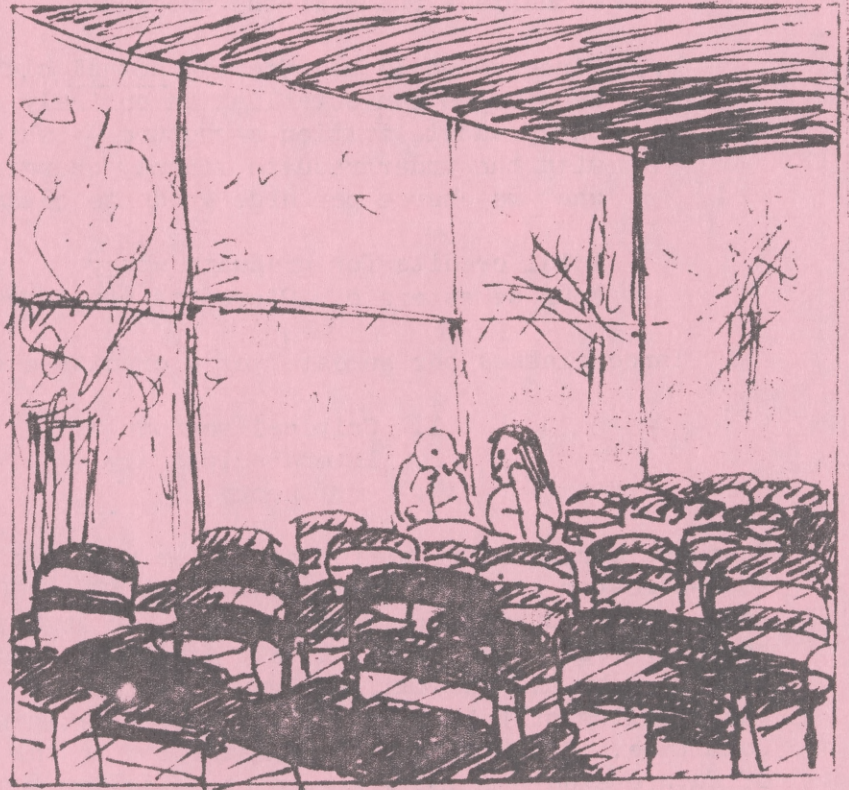
OR HOW TO BUY A
DIPLOMA AND GET
MILK AND COOKIES TOO.

This issue of the EYE has been prepared by the Student Trustees (A new EYE staff is currently being organized.) An important discussion is now taking place that we feel students should know about. It is over the type of graduate program the school is going to offer. Since the proposed change would greatly alter the school we are presenting the full proposal in the following pages.

It should be noted that the Faculty Senate rescinded its support of the proposal at a meeting on Feb. 11.

The position of the Student Trustees is in the petition on the last page. We are asking students to add your name to the petition and place it in the EYE box across from the reception office.

The proposal for the change in the graduate program will be voted on in the College Committee meeting to be held Weds., Feb. 16.



MY PIECE IS UNDER THE FOURTH DESK FROM
THE FRONT.

All interested students should attend the
Student Senate Meeting MONDAY, FEB. 14
at 4:00 p.m. in the Conference Room.

February 1, 1977

Dear Faculty Senate Member:

I am enclosing a report from the Department Chairs' meeting of Friday, November 12, 1976. It represents our considered opinion about the graduate program and makes very specific proposals for its improvement. I would ask you to read this material prior to the Faculty Senate meeting on Tuesday, February 8.

At that time I shall be present to discuss the implications of these proposals with you. I shall be seeking your support and hope to go to the College Committee on Wednesday, February 16 with your recommendation that the proposal be adopted for the fall semester of this year.

One or two points should be clarified:

- a.) This proposal if adopted would apply only to incoming new graduate students and would not be applied to graduate students already in the program.
- b.) Since we would be offering actual classes for the credit we give we can establish an entirely rational basis for the graduate tuition structure -- which would be consistent with the undergraduate scheme, charging per graduate class what we charge per undergraduate class, as follows:

Total credits for graduate study 48
Four semesters of 12 credits per semester.

Three classes per semester of 4 credits each class, as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Critical seminar | 4 credits |
| 2. Interdisciplinary | 4 credits |
| 3. Art theory | 4 credits |

Based on our current tuition rates for undergraduate classes, three four-semester credit classes would cost \$975. Currently, as you know, the cost per full graduate semester is \$870. I hope you will share my view that the relatively small extra cost is more than justified by the substantial improvements which these proposals embody. The settling of tuition fees is a matter ultimately for the Finance Committee. But I know you are sensitive to the financial resources of future students and will want to consider program changes only in consort with their financial implications.

At the same time I think I should emphasize that from the faculty point of view these proposals would mean smaller and more critique classes, and more instructional opportunities.

Finally, I share the Chairs' conviction that these proposals will make a substantial improvement in the quality of the graduate programs, will probably attract more students of high caliber to apply for the program, and last, but not least, should satisfy once and for all the criticism and reservations of WASC and NASA, our accrediting commissions.

Sincerely yours,
Roy Ascott

November 15, 1976

To: File
From: Roy Ascott
Re: DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN'S MEETING
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1976

Present were: Jack Fulton, Bill Geis, Dick Graf, David
Hannah, Larry Jordan, Ray Mondini, Roy Ascott

Subject: Graduate Studies

We discussed the fact that it was more or less impossible given the relatively small number of courses offered to have faculty only concerned with graduate teaching, and that in any case we wanted our graduate students to have access to the full variety of faculty available in the College. We agreed that much more contact was needed between the graduate students and faculty.

We discussed the idea of a pre-candidacy semester, which would enable us to accept the more marginal students whom we currently reject, and give them an opportunity at the graduate level to show their strengths. They would then be subject to heavy review to then be accepted or rejected as candidates for the M.F.A. degree program.

We agreed that seminars should be much smaller than they are currently, and a ratio of 8 to 1 would be desirable.

We should make it very, very clear in subsequent college bulletins that one of the benefits available to graduate students at SFAI is their opportunity to audit any and all undergraduate courses that they choose.

It was generally agreed that graduate students are abusing the concept of independent study. We thought that we should look at the idea of an inter-departmental graduate seminar during the summer to see how it goes.

We decided that the following requirements should apply to graduate study for all departments:

The M.F.A. degree will take four semesters in residence. Each week a student will be required to attend the following three meetings:

- a) A critique seminar, with no more than eight students to each instructor.
- b) An inter-disciplinary forum, with something on the order of 25 students to each coordinator.
- c) A seminar in art theory, criticism and analysis, which could run at around 15 to 1 for student-faculty ratio.

At the inter-disciplinary forums, students will be scheduled to present their work and ideas to the rest of the students for critical discussion, and advisors would be encouraged to attend when the students they are advising are making presentations.

Two or three students could make a presentation at each meeting.

These three classes would meet every week and would be required classes for the full four-semester M.F.A. course.

After a student had completed four semesters, and had failed in the final review to be awarded the M.F.A., he could re-present work for two subsequent semesters (but without the use of facilities during that time), and there would be no further extensions or exceptions to that rule.

Leave of absence will be heavily monitored, and will generally only be available for medical reasons.

The advisor system will still be required, and the student should be allowed the free choice of choosing from among the faculty the advisor that he would require each semester.

There would be a review of each individual student's work at the end of each semester, and students would be told that the first semester would be by way of a pre-candidacy semester, in effect, where a certain percentage would definitely be dropped out of the course.

They should be told that the faculty reserves the right to require a student to discontinue in the program. Students would then be free to re-apply to enter the program.

It was suggested, that, in the inter-disciplinary forum, and instructor would not be required, but a coordinator would be necessary.

The art theory, criticism and analysis seminar could be made open to undergraduate students, who could be required to pay a fee to attend.

Students will be required to give slides to the library at the end of each semester -- one or two slides -- to provide an ongoing record of work.

At the time of the semester-end review of students' work, written reports from the advisor, from the critique seminar leader, and from the art theory, criticism and analysis leader would be required. These written reports would then be reviewed in conjunction with the work by the reviewing committee.

A graduate committee should be formed for each department, with each member of the committee having a two-year tenure, with a sort of revolving basis which would ensure continuity and over-view of individual students work. This committee would be involved in reviewing applicants for the program and for the end-of-semester reviews.

A topic of major concern which was discussed was that of providing studio space, particularly for painting and sculpture graduate students. We should make every effort to provide a building which we could rent out for students from out of town, and to make it more or less a requirement to work in these studio spaces. This would enable the graduate faculty to have a much closer contact with the ongoing work of each student.

Independent study should be permitted only if the student presents a structured project which involves study outside of this area.

our

Reply:

"The young people of this nation of hypocrites are extremely sensitive to hypocrisy. In fact, one can build a strong argument that it matters but little what system a school adopts. If its administrators and teachers act hypocritically, the students will alienate and as required by honesty, the best will fight back or drop out."

"No school is so free as to have no requirements. The students must be given reasons for each requirement. And, generally, if they are not satisfied with the reasons, the requirements should be dropped."

from the Report on a three-year Experiment
in Teaching of Humanities at the
College of the San Francisco Art
Institute

Now the question of place, of specific environment: all of this takes place in an atmosphere-- the atmosphere of this school-- that can be characterized as something between a tightly-knit community and a jungle. Presumably the stu-

VOLUNTARY DEDICATION IN A PRACTICAL ENVIRONMENT

dent wants, to put it nicely, the opportunity for "voluntary dedication in a practical environment." He gets it-- and it turns out to mean survival of the fittest. There is so much independence, so much freedom, that only the hardiest of them really survive it. Nobody chases him to see that he does his work; roll is rarely

taken; there are no dormitories nor plans for any. He has to solve his own living problems. Nobody coddles, nobody cossets. He does his work or he doesn't...

The program of the whole school, incidentally, is built around this promise of freedom. Not freedom as a lack of rules so much, though certainly that's involved, but

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THE WHOLE SCHOOL IS BUILT AROUND THE PROMISE OF
FREEDOM

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rather as a positive essence, which is to say something that contains within itself both the threat and possibility of art as vocation. The object is to develop in the student an ability to give himself orders and carry these orders out.

Kenneth Lash
Chairman, Humanities Dept.
9 December 1965

THESE WERE IN THE CATALOG IN 73-74, WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

The College of the San Francisco Art Institute is an art school. It teaches the fine arts only, regarding painting, drawing, sculpture and ceramics, printmaking, photography and film as fine arts when the worker in these media has placed primary emphasis on the expressiveness of the completed object, on his individual freedom in making it and on his personal responsibility for its final, artistic result. Because the emphasis is placed on the individual, his need and his responsibility, the student is usually asked only to paint, to photograph, to make sculpture, prints, or films. How and what are mostly problems of his choice, his initiative. Usually only the simplest techniques will be taught, in the form of direct assignments. The rest of art will be learned like tight-rope walking, by the experience of trying one's own balance, one's own way in a complex, rich and confusing milieu of working artists teachers and students. Seemingly the most free and the most easy of tasks, this discovery of path quickly becomes the most demanding and most difficult. The student soon finds that only rigorous self-discipline will carry him through. The routine of classes helps, as does clinging to the simple fact of the need to make work, to show it to fellow students and to faculty, and to seek responses both naive and experienced.

The faculty role in all this is complex and subtle. Perhaps the painting faculty has said it best-- "Basic to the students growth is association with master artist-teachers who present information, introduce ideas and intensify their demands at times appropriate to his development. The relation of the artist-teacher to the student precludes the possibility of specific course descriptions, and the instructor is not asked to teach a syllabus covering specific material for presentation to all students in any class.. Rather, he is asked to present material

from his experience, convictions and technical knowledge in the order and at the rate which, in his judgement, will be best related to the needs of the individual student."

The faculty role is subtle, the student role is difficult. Together they make the College a chaotic, challenging, rewarding world of artistic adventure.

AND FROM AN EARLIER CATALOG:

The purpose of the college of the San Francisco Art Institute is to teach art. This purpose requires a definition of teaching method and of subject matter. The method of teaching at the Institute is defined in the very traditional relation of master to student, of the more knowledgeable and experienced artist to the less knowing student. Though the relationship is traditional, it is a source of enormous vitality: the conflict of the known and the unknown, of the tried and the new, of the generations and of the past, and the future are all played out here. No one wins, but each day the future is born.

The subject matter of teaching at the Institute can be reduced to three aspects: (1) technique, the skills which can be taught; (2) form or visual organization, which can be demonstrated and understood by example from works of the past and the student's own work; and (3) expression, which arises from the student's own experience of life and which the master affects only by the example of his own way of life as an artist. Each teacher and each student finds his own combination of these elements, and out their endless permutations, stimulated by the variability and need of the individual's unique experience, comes the ceaseless conflict of contemporary art and the spiritual tension which is the life of the school.

So that this life and spiritual tension may be maintained and not perverted, three essentially moral attitudes must be shared by students and faculty. These moral attitudes are the maximum involvement of oneself in the development of art, the full commitment of one's life to the meanings of that art, and the bearing of that art, and the bearing of the responsibility for the results of that art on oneself and others...

AND PERHAPS MORE DIRECTLY RELATED:

The curriculum is in a sense the core of the school, for it is the embodiment of our promise to provide information and experience from which the student may benefit to the extent of his ability and desire. This College Bulletin is the writing down of the curriculum in all its essential details and ramifications; it is the text of our contract with the student. His enrollment here is the acceptance of our promise and the bond of his own: to engage his fullest capacities in the aspiration of art.

"We meet today in a college....It is a college of art...,
it is a place where everyone is an individual, an autocrat.
Each is a king, or properly should be, or thinks he is, or

hopes he is going to be, or hopes someone thinks he is.

And his first responsibility is to himself...."

Gurdon Woods
Director of the College
San Francisco Art Institute
1962 Commencement Address

It suffices therefore for history to move away from us in time or for us to move away from us in time or for us to move away from it in thought, for it to cease to be internalizable and to lose its intelligibility, a spurious intelligibility attaching to a temporary internality. I am not however suggesting that man can or should sever himself from this internality. It is not in his power to do so and wisdom consists for him in seeing himself live it, while at the same time knowing (but in a different register) that what he lives is a myth— which will appear as such to men of a future century, and perhaps to himself a few years hence, and will no longer appear at all to men of a future millenium.

Claud Levi-Strauss

AS A STUDENT, MY NEED FOR THE MYTH OF SELF--DIRECTION, COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY HAS REMAINED. AS AN ARTIST, MY CHALLENGE IS TO RENEW MY MYTH.

STUDENT SENATE PETITION

On Monday, February 7, a proposal which would substantially change the MFA Program developed by the Department Chairs and the Dean was presented to the Curriculum Committee (comprised of faculty, administration, and students; this where the students have input). No vote was taken. . .

On Tuesday, February 8, the Faculty Senate approved the proposal. The major provisions are:

- 1) That these changes shall effect incoming graduates only.
- 2) That critical seminars shall be limited to 8 students
- 3) The Theory Seminar will be required of all graduates at all levels. (4th semester graduates will determine the content of the class).
- 4) An additional Interdepartmental Seminar will be required. (Ratio tentatively to be 25 to 1)
- 5) Advisors will be continued; and perhaps an advisory committee will be established.
- 6) Independent study will be limited to very exceptional proposals, most students will be required to stay enrolled full-time through the 4 semesters.
- 7) Tuition will increase more than a \$100 a semester, initially \$975.

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Discussion in the Curriculum Committee showed obvious differences of opinion, and effects on the present program are unclear. We believe the proposal for changes in the graduate program should be further considered before hasty implementation is begun. We believe that the proposal should be withdrawn and a thorough and in-depth study of the MFA Program be conducted. Further, we believe that student involvement in developing curricular changes through the present Curriculum Committee has been attenuated and made immaterial and request that a more democratic and concrete method be established.

Howard Tetrick

Frederick Hawkins

Alison K Miller

Cheryl James

SIGN THIS PETITION AND PLACE IN THE EYE BOX OPPOSITE THE RECEPTION OFFICE